OUR VISION
A Racine County workforce that is fully capable and employed.

OUR MISSION
Higher Expectations maximizes the potential of every child by engaging community partners and aligning local efforts to ensure Racine County children graduate prepared for training or college and success in their careers.

CONTENTS
1  Who We Are
2  Success Roadmap
3  Accountability Structure
4  Kindergarten Readiness
10 Elementary School Reading
14 High School Graduation
20 Post-Secondary Education & Career
26 Goals & Next Steps
32 Letter from the Executive Director
In 2008, the Racine County Workforce Development Board embraced the creation of a workforce development strategy with the vision of a workforce that will be fully employed by the year 2020. Educational, business, private, public, nonprofit, and faith-based organizations met to address the root causes of chronic unemployment and underemployment in the county, particularly for the inner city of Racine.

After spending several years creating the foundation for collaborative work, Higher Expectations for Racine County Youth launched in 2014. Today, Higher Expectations is working with more than 50 partner organizations and the broader Racine community to improve outcomes across the “career to cradle” pipeline. Higher Expectations is one of 64 partnerships throughout the country that is part of the national StriveTogether Network.

Our Model

Higher Expectations is guided by four key principles.

**SHARED VISION:** We have to know where we are going before we can design a path to get there. In collaboration with our partners, we use data to develop a shared understanding of our challenges and, together, agree on the goals we want to achieve.

**DECISION MAKING:** We use data as a flashlight to discover what’s working and develop strategies that will lead to results.

**COLLABORATIVE ACTION:** We facilitate alignment between the many organizations and initiatives that exist in our community to help our partners use resources and best practices that advance their work.

**EQUITY & EXCELLENCE:** We support partners in being accountable to holding a high bar for all students, which includes identifying and successfully addressing disparities.
SUCCESS ROADMAP
What makes us unique

Every child enters school ready to learn
Every student succeeds in school
Every student completes high school
Every person succeeds in a career

Career to Cradle
While many communities work from cradle to career, our work begins with the end in mind: a fully capable and employed Racine County workforce. To achieve this vision, we work backwards – from career to cradle – to ensure Racine County youth are prepared for success in life. Our work is part of the national StriveTogether Network, which includes more than 64 communities nationwide.

To learn more, visit higherexpectationsracinecounty.org
COLLABORATIVE ACTION NETWORKS are made up of practitioners and experts who focus on improving specific outcomes determined through an agreed-upon Charter and Action Plan.

OUR ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS, Racine County, Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce, and United Way of Racine County support the Higher Expectations staff.

THE DATA MANAGEMENT TEAM supports and guides the development of indicator metrics, data collection procedures, data sharing, and data analysis.

THE COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION COUNCIL includes local leaders who are invested in our collective impact efforts.

THE LEADERSHIP TABLE provides strategic guidance, social and financial capital, and a strong voice to champion our goals.

A Racine County workforce that is fully capable & employed

LEADERSHIP TABLE

Data Management Team

Community Transformation Council

Post-Secondary Education & Training

High School Transformation

Elementary Reading

Kindergarten Readiness

Anchor Institutions

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ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURE

What makes us effective
KINDERGARTEN READINESS

Every child enters school ready to learn

“Early learning isn’t just about letters and numbers. Young children need nurturing, high-quality environments where they have the opportunity to build social-emotional skills through problem solving and collaboration with others.”

—Culleen Witthuhn, Director of Early Learning, Racine Unified School District
Percentage of RUSD 4-year-old kindergarten students meeting or exceeding spring expectations for social and emotional development in 2015-2016

Assessment Tool: Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) | Source: Racine Unified School District (does not include Head Start programs)

- All Students (897): 92%
- Black/African American (205): 85%
- Hispanic/Latino (225): 93%
- White (395): 95%
- Two or more races/ethnicities (50): 92%

Research shows that entering kindergarten with strong early literacy and social emotional skills is key to a student’s future academic success.

Over the past three years, the percentage of 5-year-old kindergarten RUSD students meeting the fall literacy benchmark has remained steady at 78.

All numbers are rounded to the nearest whole number.
Data for other races/ethnicities are not reported due to small student population sizes.
*Students are considered “economically disadvantaged” if they qualify for free or reduced priced lunch.

To explore detailed data dashboards, visit higherexpectationsracinecounty.org
Good things happen when families have access to high-quality full-day 4-year-old kindergarten (4K). Children thrive in a stable learning environment, and parents are free to focus on their own schedules without worrying about childcare.

Because the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction funds only half-day 4K, every year about 1,000 of the Racine area’s 4-year-olds divide their days between their half-day 4K program and various childcare settings. These transitions can hinder the social and emotional growth they need to be kindergarten-ready, while making it harder for their parents to work full time.

Every child deserves to enter kindergarten prepared for long-term success. The evidence from national research is compelling: When children have access to high-quality, full-day 4K with well-trained teachers, they are academically, socially, and emotionally much better prepared for 5-year-old kindergarten (5K). High-quality learning opportunities are even more meaningful for children who come from difficult circumstances, including poverty. In the 2015-2016 school year, Racine Unified School District (RUSD) was able to fund just a few full-day 4K classrooms to test this approach. While we have not yet completed a rigorous analysis of the results from 4K classrooms across the community as of the printing of this report, early indications suggest that students in full-day 4K classrooms achieved positive outcomes, just as the national research would predict.

What is Higher Expectations doing about this? First, Higher Expectations launched a new initiative called A.I.M. Now (which stands for Achieve, Imagine, Motivate) as a pilot full-day 3K and 4K program focused on children who qualify for free or reduced lunch. It is designed to test a unique blended funding model. Half of the school day is covered by state school aid funds, while the other half is supported through the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program and supplemented by private pay for before and after school care.

Second, Higher Expectations is funding and facilitating an intensive study of 4K programs throughout the community. In partnership with RUSD, community partners like A.I.M. Now, and Acelero Learning (our local Head Start provider) the study will analyze the impact of full-day vs. half-day 4K, among other factors.

Using evidence and data to guide our work, Higher Expectations is committed to helping families access high-quality early learning opportunities. We believe that supporting families with full-day 4K drives a positive cycle: strong communities prepare students for success, and successful students go on to build stronger communities.
Recognizing the importance of access to high quality early learning programs, Higher Expectations has partnered with Racine Unified School District and Acelero Learning (our local Head Start provider) to conduct a study of 4K programs throughout the community. Together, Higher Expectations and its partner organizations will use this study to better understand the 4K experience and how different variables, such as a full-day vs. half-day experience, impact kindergarten readiness. In the spirit of using data as a flashlight to guide our work, the information generated from this study will be used to enhance programs throughout Racine County and in the larger early learning community.
THE HIGHER EXPECTATIONS KINDERGARTEN READINESS NETWORK developed this checklist in an effort to help families and the community understand some of the key indicators of “kindergarten readiness.” You can find English and Spanish versions of the Checklist on the Higher Expectations website.

Kindergarten Ready Children – with the support of Ready Families, Communities, and Schools – are prepared to become powerful learners on track for college and career success. Below is a portion of the Kindergarten Readiness Checklist, which shows some of the specific benchmarks parents can use to prepare their child for this crucial step:

1. Social and Emotional Skills
   My child can:
   - Manage his/her feelings
   - Cooperate with others

2. Language and Literacy Skills
   My child can:
   - Write his/her name
   - Identify 12-21 uppercase letters

3. Mathematical Thinking Skills
   My child can:
   - Count aloud to 20
   - Name shapes

4. Fine Motor Skills
   My child can:
   - Cut using scissors
   - Color in the lines

5. Gross Motor Skills
   My child can:
   - Jump up and down
   - Hop on one foot

6. Self-Help Skills
   My child can:
   - Tend to toileting needs
   - State his/her age
“We want to make sure, first and foremost, that our kids are reading at grade level by the time they complete third grade. That’s our ultimate goal... each year, we want to ensure we see an increase in literacy scores.”

—Rodney Prunty, President, United Way of Racine County
Research shows that reading proficiency in third grade is a predictor of high school graduation. Over the last three years, third grade reading scores for RUSD students have remained steady. However, disparities exist between students of different races/ethnicities and economic statuses.

Percentage of all RUSD third grade students achieving or exceeding spring reading national average over three academic years

Assessment Tool: Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) | Source: Racine Unified School District (RUSD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All Students</th>
<th>By Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>By Economic Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All numbers are rounded to the nearest whole number. Data for other races/ethnicities are not reported due to small student population sizes. *Students are considered “economically disadvantaged” if they qualify for free or reduced priced lunch.

To explore detailed data dashboards, visit higherexpectationsracinecounty.org
Led by the United Way of Racine County, the Schools of Hope tutoring program teaches literacy skills to some of the Racine Unified School District’s first through third graders. It is currently held in nine local elementary schools with the help of about 250 volunteers. And while Schools of Hope has long been a popular activity among students and tutors alike, its goal is to measurably improve reading achievement. With that aim in mind, the United Way works with Higher Expectations to continuously track student progress and outcomes. 

At the end of the 2014-2015 school year, Higher Expectations and their Data Team supported the United Way in analyzing their Schools of Hope data. When results showed that students in the program showed similar reading growth (as measured by the Measures of Academic Progress assessment) as those who did not receive tutoring, the partners resolved to refine their strategy. Higher Expectations is committed to using data as a flashlight, revealing areas in need of development and finding potential solutions. In this case, they recognized the United Way’s numbers as the first step towards a more targeted approach. “Higher Expectations pushed us to do more research so we could get better results,” says Janell Decker, Assistant Director of Curriculum & Instruction at RUSD. “They pushed the conversation on what to do with this great existing resource to help make it even greater.”

Following this analysis, the United Way worked with RUSD to adopt two new tutoring models. One uses Compass Learning, an instructional computer software, to augment the regular tutoring. The other, called Sound Partners, takes a more structured, phonics-based approach. The two new models were piloted along with the original through the following school year. Higher Expectations has measured performance under each of the models to determine which is most effective. “One of the goals we have here at the United Way is to be able to track how we’re doing in real time so we can make the proper adjustments and modifications to service delivery and have optimal results in our community,” says Rodney Prunty, President of the United Way. This willingness to evolve based on data analysis demonstrates agility and a commitment to continuous improvement.

Students are expected to be confident readers by the time they enter fourth grade, so it is important to master fundamentals in the years leading up to that point. RUSD and the United Way of Racine County want every student in Racine to finish third grade prepared for that next stage. To achieve that goal, RUSD, the United Way, and Higher Expectations continue to review Schools of Hope data – including data from the 2015-2016 academic year – to review outcomes and adjust the model in an effort to improve results for students. Together, we will achieve that vision, using data to light the way.
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Every student graduates

“...Our goal is to have our graduates leave our school system fully prepared for whatever they want to do in life. Whether that’s go on to college, or whether it’s to walk right into a job opportunity here in our community.”

—Dr. Lolli Haws, Superintendent of the Racine Unified School District
Over the past six years, high school graduation rates have trended up for all RUSD students, including students who are economically disadvantaged and students of color.

In the 2014-15 academic year, all Wisconsin eleventh graders were required to take the ACT (or an alternative assessment) – a benchmark of college readiness – for the first time. This data serves as a baseline for tracking future trends.

Average Composite ACT Scores 2014-15
Source: Racine Unified School District and WISEDash Public (Statewide Testing)

17.8
RUSD
20.0
Wisconsin State-wide

Percentage of RUSD eleventh grade students achieving certificates of career readiness in 2015-2016
Assessment Tool: ACT WorkKeys | Source: Racine Unified School District via Department of Public Instruction

Gold Level 15%
Silver Level 46%
Bronze Level 23%
No Certificate 16%

1,182 students tested

The ACT issues National Career Readiness Certificates indicating proficiency with foundational workplace skills as measured by the ACT WorkKeys assessment. For more information and additional data, visit: higherexpectationsracinecounty.org

All numbers are rounded to the nearest whole number.
Data for other races/ethnicities are not reported due to small student population sizes.
*Students are considered “economically disadvantaged” if they qualify for free or reduced priced lunch.

To explore detailed data dashboards, visit higherexpectationsracinecounty.org
The Academies of Racine are learning communities at Case, Park, and Horlick High School. Students participate in real-life experiences and take classes that prepare them for specific careers. In this model, ninth graders choose a specific career area or field of study to shape their curriculum and inspire their extracurricular pursuits through high school. Along the way, they can receive college credits or industry certifications while still meeting their regular graduation requirements.

While the Academies vary based on career path, each covers the 21st century skills that all employers look for today. Participating schools are shifting to 90 minute block schedule courses to allow for more in-depth projects that teach collaboration, communication, and creativity.

The Academies model doesn’t just help high schoolers discover what they want to do in life, it teaches them how to do it. It ensures that a graduate’s next step is a purposeful one, whether it be toward training, college, or career.

Higher Expectations is leading efforts to transform business and civic engagement. As the Academies of Racine are launched, Higher Expectations will build bridges between employers and RUSD to ensure students have opportunities to learn and apply academic skills that are used in the real world. The following pages describe two initiatives aimed at making these connections.

Source: Ford Next Generation Learning
Racine’s employers will play an integral role in helping the Academies succeed. More than anyone else, they understand the training and resources students need to prepare for the local workforce. Higher Expectations is fostering engagement with the business community by bringing educators into their world.

The Employer Roundtables, coordinated by Higher Expectations and Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce, took place in fall 2015, when over 400 RUSD staff members visited more than 20 local businesses including SC Johnson, Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare, and the Racine Fire Department. During these visits, teachers and administrators toured facilities and sat down with business owners to learn what they looked for in prospective employees. “It was great for educators to be in the business world,” teacher Thom Stapleman said of his visit. “We need each other and have to work together.”

Most employers surveyed afterwards agreed the event was a chance to both teach and learn from RUSD. “I think our staff got a better picture of some of the challenges teachers face,” wrote one respondent. “And I also think it will help them engage in programs with the schools in the future.”

The whole community will benefit when all of Racine’s youth graduate ready for training, college, or career. Events like the Roundtables show how different groups can build that reality together.

“Higher Expectations has brought together a group of people who don’t necessarily interact in their daily lives – The higher education institutions, the K-12 institutions, Workforce Solutions, and other employers. There’s an intentional effort to bring together a cross section of the community.”

—DeAnn Possehl, Executive Director of Educational Outreach and Adult/Non-traditional Pathways, University of Wisconsin-Parkside
Students in the Academies will choose their learning pathway as early as eighth grade, enabling them to focus high school coursework and activities around a clear goal. Higher Expectations and RUSD help inspire and inform these decisions by connecting students with the business community. “We want to partner with businesses to give our students an awareness of the potential careers available to them, as well as the opportunity to think about who they are and what life they want to have after high school,” Dr. Haws says.

In March of 2016 about 1,500 RUSD freshmen went to the Racine Civic Centre for the SEE Your Future Expo, where local employers were ready to meet them with table displays and hands-on presentations. Speaking to individuals from 50 different employers, who were representing more than 100 career opportunities, the high schoolers learned about the landscape of local job opportunities and where they might fit into it. Surveys from the event showed that students were excited to discover new career possibilities, while employers were happy to meet young people with a genuine interest in their work.

Through the efforts of Higher Expectations and their partners, and with the invaluable help of the employer community, events like SEE Your Future help these promising young learners find a passion and a path.

High School students interact with employers at the 2016 Expo
POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT

Every student succeeds in a career

“As a proud partner with Higher Expectations, UW-Parkside is focused on increasing the number of degree holders and aligning our programs to meet the evolving needs of our community and industry partners.”

—Dr. Deborah Ford, Chancellor, University of Wisconsin - Parkside
The percentage of RUSD graduates enrolling in post-secondary programs directly after high school has declined slightly in recent years.

The six-year graduation rate for students at Gateway Technical College increased slightly since last year (on average), although disparities exist for Pell Grant-eligible students and students of color.
ALIGNING EFFORTS, IMPROVING GRADUATION RATES

Higher Expectations is working with the University of Wisconsin-Parkside to support its ongoing efforts aimed at helping students complete their degrees and get the most out of their post-secondary experience. This year, Higher Expectations and the Post-Secondary Education and Training Network are collaborating with Parkside to implement new initiatives aimed at the same goal. For example, the Network is supporting the launch of a credit-bearing summer program called “Summer Scholars” that introduces students to college expectations and resources, as well as an empowerment group for African American male students to build connections with one another and African American faculty and staff.

Student retention rates and the overall number of graduates have increased at UW-Parkside in recent years. Building on this success, UW-Parkside and its partners are focused on increasing these rates and eliminating retention and graduation disparities for first-time, full-time students, particularly students of color.

Retention rates of first-time full-time UW-Parkside students by entering fall semester
Source: UW-Parkside Institutional Research Department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2nd year retention rate</th>
<th>3rd year retention rate</th>
<th>4th year retention rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6-year graduation rates of first-time full-time UW-Parkside students by starting academic year
Source: UW-Parkside Institutional Research Department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All Students</th>
<th>Black/African American</th>
<th>Hispanic/Latino</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Pell Grant Eligible**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11*</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of UW-Parkside graduates by academic year (includes all undergraduate and graduate students)
Source: UW-Parkside Institutional Research Department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2012-13</th>
<th>2013-14</th>
<th>2014-15</th>
<th>2015-16*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td>716</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>741</td>
<td>724</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: UW-Parkside enrolls a large number of transfer students who are not included in the retention and graduation rates above. For more data, see our website.
Racine Snapshot

While bachelor’s degree attainment and poverty rates have remained consistent in recent years, unemployment rates have dropped and the gap between Racine City and Racine County unemployment is narrowing. Across all metrics, there are significant disparities for residents of color.

### Highest level of education

Percentage of residents (ages 25 years and older) with a bachelor’s degree or higher: trends over time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Wisconsin</th>
<th>Racine County</th>
<th>Racine City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007-12</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-13</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-14</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Unemployment rates

Comparison of Racine City, Racine County, and Wisconsin

- **Black/African American**:
  - 2012: 12%
  - 2015: 4%

- **Hispanic/Latino**:
  - 2012: 11%
  - 2015: 4%

- **Two or more races/ethnicities**:
  - 2012: 25%
  - 2015: 11%

- **White**:
  - 2012: 21%
  - 2015: 13%

### Poverty rates

Comparison of Racine City, Racine County, and Wisconsin

- **Wisconsin**:
  - 2007-12: 15%
  - 2008-13: 15%
  - 2009-14: 15%

- **Racine County**:
  - 2007-12: 15%
  - 2008-13: 15%
  - 2009-14: 15%

- **Racine City**:
  - 2007-12: 15%
  - 2008-13: 15%
  - 2009-14: 15%

---

Other races/ethnicities are not shown for consistency with other data in this report.

“Hispanic/Latino” is reported by ACS as “Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race).” This category and “Two or more races” are not mutually exclusive of each other or other ACS racial/ethnic groups, unlike other data in this report.

** Data and geography not official. See website for more information on how and why this was calculated.

Sources:
- All other data: American Community Survey (ACS), 5-year estimates (2012-2014)
Just as data exposes areas of need in a community, it also shines a light on areas of opportunity. This is what the Higher Expectations Post-Secondary Education and Training Network, Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce, Racine County Workforce Solutions, and Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development sought to do when they partnered to launch the 2016 Workforce Skills Gap Survey.

The survey, which was sent to hundreds of local businesses in February 2016 and received an impressive 26 percent response rate, offered a telling snapshot of the local job market. Its results revealed a wealth of career opportunities that will continue to grow and diversify in the coming years, with 88 percent of respondents saying they were actively trying to fill vacancies. The survey projects there will be 727 job openings in the next 12 months, and 1,227 in the next two years, in fields as varied as health care, manufacturing, teaching, marketing, finance, and agriculture. The need for employees to take on these well-compensated roles will rise as Racine’s aging workforce transitions into retirement. Results showed a majority of employers are concerned about how they will replace these retirees.

The survey also asked employers what sort of background they were looking for in potential employees. For hard-to-fill positions, most respondents said they required 0-6 months of professional experience and were looking for candidates with a high school diploma or bachelor’s degree.

While the data from the survey is encouraging, it is also a call to action. The results will help RUSD shape its Academies, so that students can become the qualified candidates that employers so desperately need. Educators must also work with employers to create development opportunities like internships, which many survey respondents said they would be open to.

Higher Expectations has been instrumental in coordinating these efforts. “Higher Expectations has brought together a group of people who don’t necessarily interact in their daily lives,” says DeAnn Possehl, Executive Director of Educational Outreach and Adult/Non-traditional Pathways at Parkside. “Between the higher education institutions, the K-12 institutions, Workforce Solutions, and other employers, there’s an intentional effort to bring together a cross section of the community.”

The Workforce Skills Gap Survey proves that Racine has no shortage of rewarding opportunities for recent graduates. Preparing students to fill those roles requires engagement at every point in the career-to-craddle continuum.
GOALS & NEXT STEPS

The Higher Expectations team has given Racine County the framework for sustainable social change. They have successfully brought together community organizations, government, and businesses to create real movement toward our shared goal of creating a fully employed Racine County.

—Jonathan Delagrave, Racine County Executive
In addition to bringing stakeholders together and using data to drive continuous improvement, Higher Expectations is securing support from national organizations to help turn plans into action.

Higher Expectations was one of six StriveTogether partnerships nationwide selected to be part of the StriveTogether Accelerator Fund, which is intended to help communities build the capacity and infrastructure needed to improve and sustain outcomes. Support from this investment fund also enabled the Higher Expectations team to participate in the StriveTogether Leadership Program, which was facilitated by the Annie E. Casey foundation.

The Leadership Program encourages participants to explore Results-Based Accountability (RBA), a data-driven methodology for strengthening communities. Higher Expectations has applied RBA principles to its post-secondary work, leveraging conversations with students and retention data (sorted by race, college major, and other variables), to determine where best to direct its resources. “We’ve done a lot of data work in the past, but they helped us take it to the next level,” says DeAnn Possehl, Executive Director of Educational Outreach and Adult/Non-traditional Pathways. “We really spent time and effort digging deeper into the data to identify the challenges and the gaps.”

Higher Expectations is also part of Lumina Community Partnerships for Attainment Network, a network of Lumina grantees dedicated to increasing the number of adults with post-secondary credentials. Funding from Lumina Foundation has enabled Higher Expectations to partner with institutions like UW-Parkside to launch initiatives aimed at improving graduation rates, particularly among students of color.

“The Results-Based Accountability framework drives us to be disciplined about how we tackle local challenges, whether we’re planning a meeting, asking probing questions of, or working with our partners to identify the root cause of an obstacle. We keep results at the center of our work. One of my favorite lessons from the training is ‘A meeting without results is work avoidance!’”

—Jeff Neubauer, Executive Director
Higher Expectations for Racine County Youth
Like RUSD, the School District of Menomonee Falls (SDMF) uses data to inform their teaching strategies. Upon learning about the success of SDMF’s approach, community leaders saw the potential to apply a similar model in Racine.

Higher Expectations helped coordinate a meeting between RUSD superintendent Dr. Lolli Haws and SDMF superintendent Dr. Pat Greco. After this initial collaboration, Higher Expectations co-sponsored the participation of RUSD representatives and community partners in SDMF’s “Continuous Improvement Bootcamps.” At these immersive two-day events, participants spoke to leaders overseeing education initiatives, and visited the classrooms where the ideas were being put into practice. “I know many of the teachers who were there gained a lot of insight and had a lot of ‘Ah-ha’ moments where they thought – ‘Oh, we can do that!’” Dr. Haws says.

To bring these ideas to fruition, RUSD has hired the consulting firm Studer Education to create a five-year-plan for improvement. Slated to launch in January of 2017, the plan will engage local stakeholders in creating new opportunities for students.

Together, Higher Expectations and RUSD plan to continue working with other communities to gain insight and apply continuous improvement practices across the entire career-to-cradle continuum. In order to truly make a difference in our county, we need to use evidence to understand what’s working, what’s not, why, and how to adjust our strategies to increase our impact. “It’s a constant cycle of planning, doing something about it, studying what happened, and then acting on it,” says Janell Decker, Assistant Director of Curriculum & Instruction at RUSD. “Starting at a kindergarten level and going all the way up through high school and beyond.”
WAYS TO GET INVOLVED
Be part of the solution

Join a network
It takes an entire community – parents, nonprofits, businesses, faith-based organizations and so on – to make real and lasting change. Visit the Higher Expectations website to learn more about our Networks and how you can be an active member.

Volunteer
Work with our partner organizations, including the United Way of Racine County and their Schools of Hope program. Check out the Higher Expectations website to learn more about volunteer opportunities.

Explore our data dashboards
Visit the Higher Expectations Website and our Data Dashboard. Using data to understand the past and present will help to shape the strategies that lead us to a brighter future.

Donate
Your tax-deductible donation will be used to support our efforts to build a fully capable and employed Racine County Workforce.

Contact us
Jeff Neubauer, Executive Director, jeff.neubauer@career2cradle.org
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LEADERSHIP TABLE

Our Leadership Table is composed of local leaders from business, nonprofit, civic, and education organizations in Racine County.

Dr. Bryan Albrecht
President, Gateway Technical College

John Batten
President & CEO, Twin Disc, Inc.

Susan Boland
President, Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare – All Saints

Thomas A. Burke
President & CEO, Modine Manufacturing Company

Ann Daane
Vice President, HR – North America, CNH Industrial

Jonathan Delagrave
Racine County Executive

John Dickert
Mayor, City of Racine

Dr. Deborah L. Ford
Chancellor, University of Wisconsin – Parkside

Dr. Lolli Haws
Superintendent, Racine Unified School District

Art Howell
Chief of Police, City of Racine

James A. Ladwig
President, RAMAC

Rodney Prunty
President and Chief Professional Officer, United Way of Racine County

Kelly M. Semrau
Senior Vice President, Global Public Affairs, Communication & Sustainability, SC Johnson

James E. Walker
Vice President, Case IH North America, CNH Industrial

Dr. Gregory Woodward
President, Carthage College

To see other partners in our work, visit higherexpectationsracinecounty.org
As you can see from this report of our annual activities, we are making progress in Racine County! However, clearly there is much work to be done.

It’s helpful to remember that the War on Poverty was declared just over 50 years ago. While many people have received help and assistance over the last 50 years, even its most ardent supporters will admit this initiative has not met expectations. As a nation we have invested enormous amounts of money, time, and talent in this effort since 1965. So what makes us think our work here will be different and more effective?

Our strength lies in the tremendous, deep, and powerful collaboration of our many partners who embrace the process of collective impact. In Racine County this is not business as usual: we are willing to embrace the hard cold truth of our reality, measure our effectiveness, and change our practices to focus on and achieve better results.

Communities with deeply entrenched challenges do not normally work this way. We need only look to our large neighboring communities to the north and south as examples of how difficult it is to bring together diverse and powerful interests to honestly assess and confront challenges and then to effectively implement what must be done to create true Systems Change.

Claiming that we are different in doing remarkable work here is not simply local boosterism. We are the only place in the country to be recognized and proactively supported by all three of these leading independent national organizations:

The StriveTogether Accelerator Fund, which chose us as one of six communities in the country to receive exceptional support to push us to improve outcomes by 2018; Lumina Foundation, which selected us as one of 75 communities in the country to increase the percentage of Americans with high-quality degrees, certificates, and other credentials to 60 percent by the year 2025; and The Ford Motor Company’s philanthropic arm, Ford Next Generation Learning, chose the Racine Unified School District as one of roughly 20 school systems in the country to assist and invest in RUSD’s High School Transformation.

Higher Expectations was re-launched in our county in April of 2014. Other communities engaged in this work have been doing this for as long as 10 years. However, we do not have the luxury of 10 years to become a Proof Point partnership for our citizens and the country.

We must and will work smarter, harder, and faster to demonstrate in very tangible and measurable ways that we are achieving true Systems Change in our county which will lead us toward a fully capable and employed workforce. In the process, we will achieve real results in both meeting the needs of our employers and proving that we can break the cycle of poverty.

To accomplish these very ambitious results we need your help and active engagement – please join us in this work!

We owe ourselves and our children nothing less.

Jeff Neubauer
Executive Director
Expectations Higher for Racine County Youth

higherexpectationsracinecounty.org